

REMARKS

The sole issue raised in the outstanding Official Action was the rejection of original claims 1-15 under 35 USC §102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by BANIK 6,185,720. That rejection is respectfully traversed, for the following reasons.

BANIK is rather similar in its pertinent disclosure to the prior art document 1 already acknowledged and discussed at pages 1-3 of the present specification. That is, in BANIK, as in the acknowledged prior art, flip-flops are addressed individually and, if the propagation delay is longer than desired, converted to or replaced by a latch. By contrast, each of the independent claims 1, 6, and 11 specify that flip-flops not to be substituted into a latch are first selected and designated as such, following which the delay analysis is performed only on those flip-flops not previously designated as being off limits by the preceding designation.

The Official Action references column 5, lines 58-67; column 6, lines 1-5; column 6, lines 10-13; column 6, lines 45-59; and column 7, lines 34-43 of BANIK in connection with this recitation of the independent claims 1, 6, and 11. However, those passages of BANIK relate to the delay analysis of individual flip-flops. None of those passages discloses or suggests a preliminary step or means that involves exempting selected flip-flops from such delay analysis. Neither does any

other disclosure in BANIK appear to disclose or suggest this feature of the claims.

The above is not intended to be a necessary complete accounting of the differences between the claimed invention and BANIK. However, as the above discussion identifies a particular recitation of each of the independent claims 1, 6, and 11 not disclosed or suggested by the applied reference, it is believed that the anticipation rejection is overcome. As to the dependent claims 2-5, 7-10, and 12-15, the same are believed also to be in condition for allowance at least by virtue of their dependency from allowable independent claims.

In view of the present response and the foregoing remarks, therefore, it is believed to be apparent that this application is in condition for allowance with claims 1-15, as originally filed. Allowance and passage to issue on that basis are accordingly respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional
fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

Benoit Castel
Reg. No. 35,041 for

Andrew J. Patch, Reg. No. 32,925
745 South 23rd Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Telephone (703) 521-2297
Telefax (703) 685-0573
(703) 979-4709

AP/mjr